



By TJ REID
For the Keizertimes

I was a sophomore in high school when The Great Recession hit, but if my future grandchildren were to ever ask me what it was like to live through such a historic time, the only thing I could respond with would be shrug. Not only was my past ignorance and current lack of exciting anecdotes a product of my age at the time, but it was also a result of the fact that my family and I were very, very lucky to emerge from those turbulent times relatively unscathed.

As I have extended further beyond the youthful bubble of privilege, however, I have discovered what you undoubtedly already know: that to a great number of people, those years were devastating. This economic turmoil sets the stage for *Nomadland*, a new Frances McDormand film about a woman who loses everything and decides to cut the ties that bind her down by learning how to live the life of a

nomad. Gorgeous, melancholic, and powerful, *Nomadland* is a slowly paced, light-on-plot character study that speaks to the restlessness in all of us.

The acting is wonderfully and earnestly done, even if we were to somehow set aside for the moment the Oscar, Emmy, and Tony award winning force of nature that is Frances McDormand. All of the nomads save for McDormand's character Fern and David Strathairn's character Dave are portrayed

by those who actually live the lifestyle presented, and you would definitely be excused if you mistook them for professional actors. I sometimes felt like I was watching a documentary disguised as narrative, which is a testament to the efforts

of those behind the film to make the experience feel as authentic as possible.

Another contributing factor to this feeling is the plot which, like I said earlier, is actually quite thin. *Nomadland* is not your usual exposition-rising action-climax type of story, but rather a personal journey filled with self-reflective moments and interactions that build upon a greater whole (all the while accompanied by a lovely yet simple soundtrack). Not everybody will find this meandering type of story appealing or compelling; people come, people

go, interactions happen and McDormand's character moves on before repeating the whole thing again. But isn't that how life is? Just blew your mind, didn't it?

Something else that struck me is the effortless balance this movie maintains

between beauty and hardship. There is not a single malicious character in the entire film, and the nomadic society is one of community and acceptance. But it is also a road full of loneliness and trials, which results in a satisfying mixture of themes. *Nomadland* trusts the audience to understand these themes on their own without beating them over the head, which is something I appreciate. Nowhere is this trust more apparent than in McDormand's performance; Fern is by no means the type of character who would go out of the way to explain to a stranger what she's feeling, instead allowing her face to do the work.

If you are one who can appreciate film as art, *Nomadland* will be a gratifying experience. Viewers might even discover some insights on the journey of life and how hardship can lead to enlightenment. At the very least it will make you want to go camping, which is cool too.

Nomadland is now available on Hulu.

Review

Salem Cinema opens for in-person shows

Salem Cinema is now re-open for in-person screenings.

Tickets must be purchased online and seats will be socially distanced. Masks or face coverings are required at all times. Virtual screenings are still available and can be purchased online.

Hand sanitizing stations were installed throughout the building for anyone to use. The amount of people allowed in the bathrooms will be limited.

The independent movie theater is also offering virtual screenings. Once purchased, the movie can be watched on any electronic device or TV. The FAQ page on their website has information on how to set up and rent movies.

Virtual viewing choices include a number of independent films and a large selection of documentaries.

For more information, go to salemcinema.com

Tune in to First Citizen awards March 20

The Keizer Chamber of Commerce will broadcast its annual First Citizen's Banquet Saturday, March 20.

Awards are presented for First Citizen, Service to Education and Merchant of the Year.

The ceremony is going online this year to ensure safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. Anyone is welcome to watch the ceremony for free on the Keizer Chamber of Commerce Facebook page.

The First Citizen Award is given to recipients that exemplified the City of Keizer's motto of Pride, Sprit, and Volunteerism within their work, volunteerism, or activism for the community. Service to Education Award is given to a



Keizer area administrator, teacher or volunteer. Merchant of the Year Award is given to an individual and/or business that did the most in the past year for the Keizer business community.

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